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NOTES AND NEWS.

LENGTH OF THE MAYA YEAR.—I wish to announce the discovery of positive evidence in one of the Maya manuscripts (the Dresden codex) that 365 days were, in some instances at least, counted to the year.

This appears by counting from one month to another the days indicated on pages 46-50 of the Dresden codex. One of these pages is figured in connection with my paper on the Maya codices.*

In three lines of these pages are month symbols with numerals at the side indicating the day of the month. At the bottom of each page are counters or numerals denoting the intervening days. By adding the number in the counter to the number of the day of the month over it we obtain the number of the day of the month following. Thus, by adding 90 days to March 25th we reach June 23. As the eighteen Maya months have each twenty days the count is simple, for as it is easy to see that 90 days from the 12th of the first month will bring us to the second day of the sixth month; but following the days of the month indicated in the codex we find that, counting 90 days from the 12th day of the 17th month (passing, of course, from the 18th to the first as we do from December to January), instead of reaching the second day of the 4th month we have the 17th of the 3d month. By adding the five intercalated days at the end of the 18th month to make the 365, we find the number in the codex to be correct.

As numerous instances of this kind are found on the five pages of the codex mentioned, we have what may be accepted as positive evidence of the year of 365 days.

CYRUS THOMAS.

CEREMONIAL CANNABALISM IN EAST AFRICA.—"In the neighborhood of Kivugu (on the main caravan road inland from Bagamoyo) is the frontier of the Wadoë. As such unreliable ideas prevail in regard to the cannibal habits of these people, I sent out my head man Kombo to procure information secretly on this point; the

* Sixth Ann. Rep. Bur. Ethnology, p. 297.

truth would never have been told to me personally. What I thus learned is nearly as follows:

"According to tradition, the Wadoë, who now are located on the lower Wami, have migrated hither from the west; they say that their relatives are the Manyema, west of the great lakes, on the Kongo, among whom cannibalism is prevalent even at the present day. Every year, at a stated time, the chief of each village slays a perfectly black man, which it is often hard to get, and has him dragged into the jungle. It is now the duty of an appointed man in the village to devour parts of this corpse secretly, and to cut off the upper part of the skull. This is presented to the chief of the village and used for pombe drinking on festal occasions. The office of this 'man-eater' has descended by inheritance in the same family from father to eldest son from the earliest times, somewhat as was formerly the case with the headsmen among us. The Wadoë never acknowledge these customs when questioned, but their neighbors here assert that they know all about them. They could not tell me the meaning of them. People said, 'Such was the custom from old times.'"—*Dr. F. Stuhlmann, in Mittheilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft in Hamburg, 1887-'88.* JOHN MURDOCH.

LONGEVITY IN JAPAN.—The last Japanese census report (March, 1890) shows that 983,856 people had reached the age of 70; 199,074, that of 80; 7,507, 90; 9 males and 21 females, 101; 9 females, 102; 1 male and 2 females, 103; 4 males and 18 females, 104; 3 males and 6 females, 105; 1 male and 1 female, 106; and 1 female, 107.

Mr. T. E. Halifax (Journal of the China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. 24, p. 307) considers these figures especially remarkable as showing the immunity with which the Japanese inhale both tobacco and charcoal fumes. The Japanese have a habit of sitting close to the charcoal fire, with their heads leaning over, so as to inhale the fumes to such an extent as would knock over a European, and both sexes are inveterate smokers, inhaling all the tobacco smoke. He thinks it a matter for surprise that any Japanese should reach a hundred, seeing that the greater part of their lives they inhale poisonous matter, thereby diminishing the needful supply of oxygen in the same proportion. JOHN MURDOCH.